

Leptospirosis in Dogs



WHAT IS LEPTOSPIROSIS?

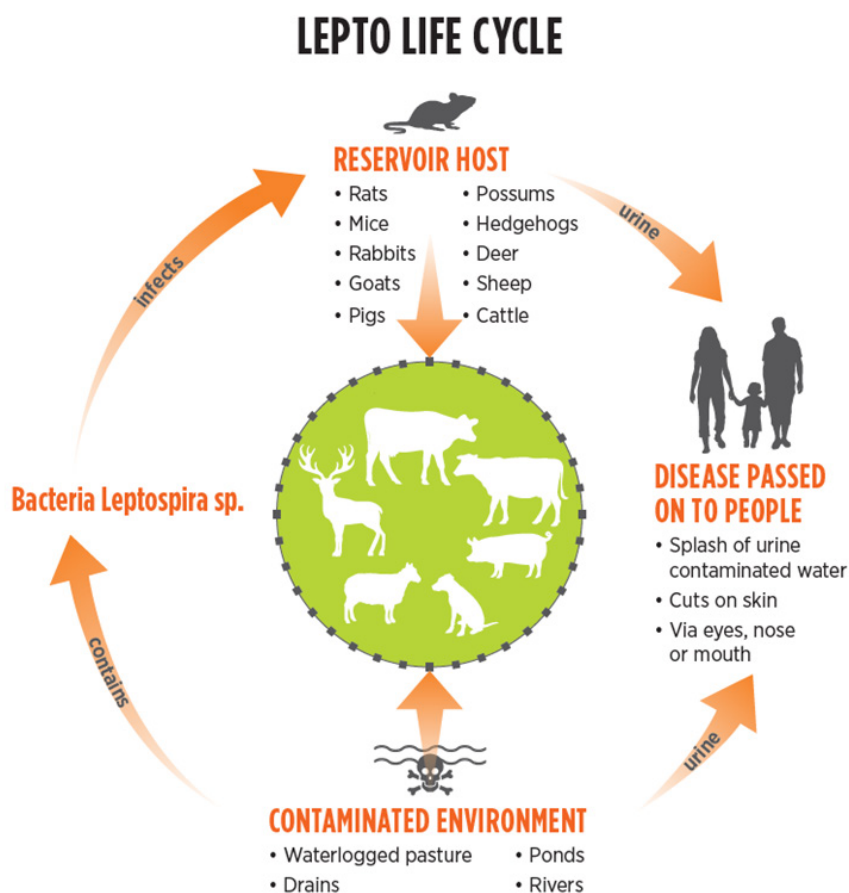
Leptospirosis is a bacterial spirochete infection which affects most mammals, but dogs and humans are more susceptible. The infection is treatable, however, lack of treatment may cause liver and kidney failure and can be fatal in some cases. The disease is typically carried by rats and is spread by their urine, and infects both dogs and humans through the gums, eyes and skin abrasions. The bacteria can stay alive in water and moist environments and is often more prevalent after flood events.

Leptospirosis is a zoonotic disease, which means it can be passed onto humans via infected urine or via contaminated soil and water. In humans, it causes flu-like symptoms. Anyone working with dogs, sheep and cattle in flood-affected area should be aware of this disease.

HOW DO DOGS GET INFECTED?

Leptospirosis is spread by the shedding of bacteria in the urine of infected mammals (such as rats). Infection occurs via:

- mucus membrane
- damaged skin or wounds
- contact with contaminated soil/water



Graphic courtesy of Zoetis and Dairy New Zealand <https://www.zoetis.co.nz/livestocksolutions/dairywellness/disease-prevention/protect-against-leptospirosis.aspx>

SYMPTOMS OF LEPTOSPIROSIS IN DOGS

Leptospirosis lives in, and damages, the kidneys. Symptoms may include:

- lethargy and fever
- decreased appetite
- vomiting and abdominal pain
- haemorrhages on the skin
- blood in urine or no urine
- coughing and shortness of breath
- shivering and muscle pain
- bleeding disorders

PREVENTING LEPTOSPIROSIS

LPs are advised to keep their greyhounds away from areas of water (such as puddles, ponds, dams) and dispose of any food scraps to ensure kennels are free of anything that might attract rodents. Follow the advice of medical and vet practitioners if one of your greyhounds is ill.

There are vaccinations available – please discuss this option with your veterinarian based on risk in your location and the serovar, or type of Leptospirosis posing a threat.

If you have any questions relating to Leptospirosis, seek advice from your preferred vet or contact welfare@grnz.co.nz

HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK ACT

Failure to take all practicable steps to prevent leptospirosis among employees, work contractors or workplace visitors may be considered a breach of the Health and Safety at Work Act for which prosecution may result. It is the responsibility of all people in the workplace to identify and mitigate critical risks. If any staff get leptospirosis this must be reported to WorkSafe as an 'occupational zoonosis'.



**WE LOVE OUR DOGS.
THEY LOVE TO RACE.**

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